

UNITED PRESS INTERNATIONAL

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ADD CUBANS, NEW YORK (UPI-46)

STATE DEPARTMENT PRESS OFFICER LINCOLN WHITE SAID HE UNDERSTOOD DONOVAN WAS LEAVING "VERY SHORTLY" TO RESUME NEGOTIATIONS IN HAVANA BUT HAD NOT LEFT THE UNITED STATES FOR CUBA AS OF NOON TODAY. HE SAID DONOVAN HAD NOT BEEN AT THE STATE DEPARTMENT TODAY AND DID NOT KNOW WHETHER THE ATTORNEY HAD BEEN IN WASHINGTON.

WHITE SAID THE U. S. GOVERNMENT HAD "NOT DIRECTLY" RAISED ANY OF THE MONEY FOR A PRISONERS RANSOM. HE DECLINED TO SAY WHETHER ANY U. S. SURPLUS COMMODITIES WOULD BE SHIPPED TO CUBA.

WHITE SAID "FEDERAL AGENCIES" WERE "HELPING IN ANY WAY THEY CAN BECAUSE OF THE SYMPATHETIC INTEREST OF THIS GOVERNMENT IN THE RELEASE OF THESE PRISONERS.

WHITE SAID THIS U. S. GOVERNMENT "HELP" INCLUDED MAINLY MAKING IMMIGRATION ARRANGEMENTS TO QUICKLY RECEIVE ANY PRISONERS WHO ARE RELEASED.

ASKED WHETHER THE STATE DEPARTMENT HAD HOPES THE PRISONERS MIGHT BE RELEASED BEFORE CHRISTMAS, WHITE DODGED THE QUESTION.

"OUR HOPE HAD BEEN TO GET THEM OUT LONG BEFORE CHRISTMAS," HE REPLIED.

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